

MERRY CHRISTMAS?

A LIVE
TEACHING :

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A Live Teaching by Arthur Bailey

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When we think about Christmas, it's really celebrated unlike any other holiday. I mean, when you think about it, every holiday in American culture is associated with **a day**. Christmas however, is associated with **a season**. I mean, this is one of the things that makes it so difficult. If it was just a day, that came and went, like the Fourth of July, like Easter, like Thanksgiving, or any of those days, then it would be a lot easier to deal with. But the Christmas season begins right after Thanksgiving and continues for the next month. From November 24th to December 24th we are going to be bombarded by this "spirit of Christmas" that is continually trying to suck us in by way of family members and co-workers.

For those of us who have businesses, what do we do? You want people to come to you and do business with you, especially if it is some form of retail business that deals directly with the public. You now have to decide if you are going to put up lights, and wreaths, and ornaments, and Christmas cheer. Because if you don't, you are going to look odd. I mean, just look at it, you are going to look odd. What are folks going to think, if you don't celebrate Christmas?

The Christmas holiday is one of those holidays that believers, Christians, some Jews, Muslims, and every other people on the planet, including atheists and non-believers, celebrate. One of the things that I've always questioned is, how in the world does something holy that has its origins in holiness become adopted by the world? Now what's really interesting is that the world has not adopted Passover. It has not adopted the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It has not adopted Shavuot; it has not adopted Yom Kippur or the Feast of Trumpet or Tabernacles. The world has not adopted any holy day that is mentioned in scripture; **not a one has the world adopted**. When we as a people, who are supposed to be followers of YeHoVaH, are **celebrating a holy day like the world**, which is not religious at all, that **should be a red flag for us**.

December 25th has become the holiest day on the Christian calendar, besides Easter. Most people in the Christian community put a lot of emphasis on Christmas. They don't decorate their homes during Easter; they don't hang lights during Easter. There is no decoration of the church facility or the assembly halls during Easter. Christmas is a whole

different ball game: celebrations, decorations, pageants, and everything else that is associated with it. Not only in the church world, but also in the secular world.

It is the most celebrated day by the secular world. Isn't that amazing? Christmas is the most celebrated, more so than Halloween, and we know where its origins come from. Businesses expect from the day after Thanksgiving to the day before Christmas that they are going to make up for any lost revenues during the year. So they compete furiously for your business because it has become one of the biggest money making holidays on the planet.

And then there is the so-called Christmas story. For many families, the tradition will be to gather and read from the Bible, the 2nd Chapter of the Book of Luke or Matthew Chapter 2. It has become known, as many would consider, the Christmas story about the birth of Jesus Christ. So, in order to continue to keep Christ in Christmas, to take the focus off of the toys that are under the tree, before we retrieve the toys, you have to read the Christmas story.

And of course, "Jesus is the Reason for the Season." How many of us have used that slogan?

We know that according to the Bible, there were Magi, called wise men by some translations, who came from the east. They were following a star; they found the baby Jesus in a manger and this erroneous picture has ended up in churches today.

For many who no longer celebrate Christmas, it is very awkward. I mean, when you are dealing with family members and co-workers who are deeply passionate about the Christmas time of year, you feel like almost there's this military spirit that is forcing you to embrace, to adopt, even to say, "Merry Christmas...Merry Christmas...Merry Christmas!" We as Westerners feel that when someone greets us it is only respectful and honoring to greet them back.

"Hello, how are you doing today?"

"Oh, I'm fine."

"Have a nice day."

"You too."

"Merry Christmas!"

"????????????????!"

So now, what do you say, what do you do?

What is the origin of Christmas? Is Christmas a worldly holiday or is it a Christian holy day? Should Christ be in Christmas? Is Jesus the Reason for the Season? How should true believers respond to Christmas? We are going to deal with some of that.

Where did Christmas originate? When you can trace something back to its origin, you can generally get an understanding or idea of what it's all about. Because the origin of the thing, will tell you the spirit behind it. Which is why it is important.

For example, when you listen to music on the radio, on our cell phones, on television, very few of us really look into the lyrics or the spirit in which these lyrics were written. Do you understand what I'm saying? Even Christian music! I know people who are actually writers of music. They don't sing it; they simply write it and stars - people who sing, who have the voice to sing - buy songs from the people who write the songs. And so many of the songs that you hear, that are being sung, are not written by the people who are singing them.

Now think about some of the things that are going on when the person is coming up with the lyrics they are writing. The songwriter is selling lyrics, somebody else buys it and puts a copyright on it; and then music is added. Eventually it ends up on a singer's CD or their album or maybe their MP3. Now it's the singer's song that they bought, but the songwriter was probably sitting at home conjuring up spirits, smoking marijuana, taking a hit off the crack pipe, trying to get inspiration from somewhere to write a song and then sell it to a Christian artist. Now, you're listening to a song that has become popular; it's labeled a Christian song even though its origin was not.

There are spirits that are associated with everything we do. This is why this season is considered the Christmas season and people get into the **Christmas spirit**. It is a spirit that shows up this time a year. It's not in July. It's not in August. It's not in January; but it shows up right after November 24th. Now, some people are trying to bring this spirit in before Thanksgiving!

Where did the idea of Santa Claus come from? What does Santa Claus have to do with the birth of Jesus? Where did the traditions of mistletoe, Christmas trees, wreaths, and the custom of exchanging gifts come from?

Now when you think about it, the actual gift giving custom was taken from the Magi, or the wise men, who brought gifts to Yeshua. And now that has been translated into giving gifts to one another.

It's amazing when you realize that people purposefully think about how to incorporate pagan rituals into a spiritual environment; they associate some form of scripture to the ritual. For example, a person takes a secular song, puts Jesus in the song, then now we have just taken a song that was written by a secular artist and Christianized it. You see, this is what happens. You find people in churches that are singing, and rocking, and clapping to beats that have been taken from the world, had Jesus added to it, Christianized, and now it is a Christian song. And, I'm going to tell you, music is notorious for that. Music is one of those entities, those things in the earth that does not need permission to enter into your spirit. The Bible says that we should be guarding our heart because out of the heart flows the issues of life. Jeremiah said our heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it.

As I was driving on my way to services this morning, Father and I were just dialoging. He was revealing to me something that I don't know why I didn't think of it before, but it is obvious. He said, "You know the devil has an advantage." He does. The advantage that the devil has over us and over our children is that we were born his. See, you and I, and your children, and my children were born children of the devil. Don't ever forget that! I don't care how religious you are, I don't care how long you've been in church.

If you ever forget that, you will neglect the fact that we and our children **must be born again**. Your children are children of the devil unless you lay claim to them and **teach, diligently**, the word of YeHoVaH that is going to transform them from children of darkness to children of light. If you don't do that, if you let your children grow up on their own, they are simply going to follow the path that the enemy has already laid out for them and never, ever, find the path to YeHoVaH and the plan that He has for their lives.

This is why the next message that I am going to prepare is, "*And You Shall Teach.*" You see the Father didn't just say teach, but **teach diligently**. Because if we don't grab a hold of the word of YeHoVaH, we have no choice but to become fodder for the enemy. And so in this wise, the enemy, the devil, Satan, HaSatan, whatever you want to call him, has an advantage. This is

why your children don't want to go to worship, this is why they don't want to read the Bible, and this is why they don't want to listen to anything that is related to the word.

But they gorge, and gorge, and feast on worldly stuff: television, movies, and music because they were born the children of the devil. And if you ever forget that, you will lose them. Right now we have lost the younger generation. This is nothing to be playing with folks. This is serious! And so our children, and many of us, we would much rather celebrate the things that the world accepts because we don't want to deal with the rejection of the world for rejecting the paganism that the world is steeped in, because the world that has not accepted the Messiah, are children of the devil.

That nice person you work with, that nice person who comes to your store or business, those nice people who are always speaking to you and telling you how nice you look, all of the nice people in the world that have rejected Messiah or who have not received the Messiah, **make no mistake about it, they are children of the devil.** Now these are not my words. We were born in sin. We were born lawless and shaped in iniquity. **We must teach, and teach diligently, day and night, when you rise up, when you go to bed, day and night!** Oh, you just wait until I bring this message!

Many are concerned about putting Christ back into Christmas and the question is, "Was He ever there?" This has been the argument of the church, "They are trying to steal Christmas!" Oh, yeah, well, who gave you Christmas? If it doesn't belong to you, why are you trying to hold on to it? It is amazing to me that the world, which rejects the holy days that YeHoVaH has given us, wants to fight for something that has origins from the devil. Now, that lets us know whose daddy they are answering to. So the church has to keep Christ in Christmas.

Christmas is thought by most to be a wonderful time. The lights are pretty. The carols are nice. The smells are wonderful. Oh, it's nice riding through downtown and seeing all the beautiful lights. I mean it just makes you all warm and fussy inside. Come on, be honest! Sometimes I just want to stop and stare. "Wow, look at the lights, they are just so..." There is something about lights and fire that causes us to gaze into them. You are sitting there at the fireplace and just looking into the fire. At bonfires, just looking into the fire in a daze. The

lights, the pretty lights, we just look at them. Wow! Oh, when they twinkle! Oh! “Twinkle, twinkle, little star.” And it just pulls you right in and the next thing you know, we’ve got to shake ourselves and say, “What am I doing?”

What does the Bible have to say about Christmas and its relationship to the birth of Christ? Nothing! Is Christmas even in the Bible? No!

So why are people trying to put it there? Where did the Christmas tradition truly begin? I think we can trace it all the way back to Genesis 10.

- *Genesis 10:8-10 (King James Version), ⁸And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a **mighty one** in the earth.⁹He was a **mighty hunter** before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the **mighty hunter** before the Lord.*

Now those of us who have a basic understanding of Hebrew, and looking at the Almighty, and **He is set apart**, we know that **He is the Almighty**. Now there is the fact that there is **The Almighty**, but then there is also in the Bible other gods, other mighty ones. **He** says that we’re not to put any other mighty one before **Him who is ALMIGHTY**. “*He was a mighty hunter before YeHoVaH. Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before YeHoVaH.*”

Now the questions is, who is saying this? “Wherefore it is said,” by whom? You see when you have a mighty one in the earth, when you have powerful people in the earth, other people take note. People take note of individuals who have made a name for themselves.

- *Genesis 10:10 (King James Version), And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech and Accad, and Calneh, **in the land of Shinar**.*

Babel was the root of Babylon. Now I would dare say that prior to me teaching this, a year or two ago, that many individuals would look at the land of Shinar and see absolutely no significance to this whatsoever. But remember the bible teaches us that man should not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of YeHoVaH.

When you begin to look at the origin of a thing, especially when something is manufactured, every manufacturer typically creates a manufacturer’s manual and with that comes a manufacture’s warrantee if you operate the manufactured item according to its instructions. You violate the warrantee when you don’t operate it according to the manufacturer’s instructions. The origin of the thing is the manufacturer. The manufacturer

decides it is going to create something for a particular purpose. And generally it is going to meet the needs of people: “I have to have that,” or “I want that,” or “I want to do that.”

When it comes down to the things in the Bible, again the **origin** of a thing, it is important to identify, because **once you identify the origin of it, you get closer to the spirit that is behind it**. If you don't understand the spirit that is behind it, then you'll be sucked into it by that spirit unaware that it's even associated with anything spiritual.

You see ladies and gentlemen, we live in the natural realm that we can see, but we also live in the spirit realm. **We live in the spirit realm and our Almighty is spirit. The Mighty One** is spirit. No one has ever seen Satan. We imagine a picture of him. I know, red suit, horns, grotesque looking, pitch fork, dragon tail. We put a picture to him, but you've never seen Satan. You've seen the people under his influence, or so you say.

You've never seen YeHoVaH. You've never seen Elohim. You can see His manifestation and if he decides to reveal himself to you, it's typically a personal situation to where now you try to explain it to other people and they are going to think you're crazy because how is it that you see Him and live and He is spirit.

You may see a manifestation. You see how He manifests and because you understand the things of the spirit and the things of the world, now you can be determined by one's actions what spirit they are operating under. Whether they are operating under the word, or they are operating under something else; whether they are walking in the spirit or they are walking in the flesh; whether they are speaking to you of spiritual things, or whether are they speaking to you of natural things. You are able to hear this in the natural, and discern by the spirit, what spirit a person may be of. This is why Yeshua says you will know them by their fruit, by their works, by their manifestation.

But we live in a spirit realm that is not seen, operating in a natural realm that we see with our eyes. So when the Bible says we have to walk by faith, that means we have to walk with the dependency on the spirit realm in a natural realm which we see, which makes it easier for us to walk by sight than it is for us to walk by faith. And often times the things that we see entrap us.

We get entrapped by our eyes, the desire to have something that we see, because the **eyes are never full of seeing, never full of seeing**. We get this. Now that we got this, let's move on to something else. I have got to have that. I have got that and now I've got to have something else. "Oh wow! I've got to get that." We walk by sight and we don't realize sometimes that our sight traps us.

YeHoVaH says through Yeshua, that when it comes down to the sower, that when the sower sows the seed, meaning the word, it is the things in the natural realm that cause people to not allow the spirit to take root and bring forth fruit from the seed. It is the lust of the eye, the deceitfulness of riches, the things that we can see compared to the things that we can't see.

When the things that we see have a spirit behind it, and in order to get the thing that we see, we have to tap into the spirit of that thing. This is what determines whether a person lives in poverty or whether a person lives in opulence. The spirit. You don't see the spirit of a person except by the action of a person, and then once you identify the action of a person, and the consistency of that action, you discern that person. You make a determination whether you are going to be around them or not be around them. And a good example of what kind of person you are will be determined by the people you hang around.

The word "*before*" is the Hebrew word *paniyim*.

- *The word "before" is the Hebrew word panियim, paw-neem'; plural (but always as singular of an unused noun; paneh, paw-neh'; from 6437); the face (as the part that turns); used in a great variety of applications (literally and figuratively); against, anger.*

He was a mighty hunter ***before, against*** YeHoVaH. Wherefore it is said, even as Nimrod the mighty hunter (before) against YeHoVaH.

It is believed that Nimrod was **against YeHoVaH** and that Nimrod led the people in rebellion against YeHoVaH to build the tower of Babel. Look at what happened under Nimrod's leadership. The Father said, "Look at these men, we need to do something." So He comes down and He confounds the language.

We get an idea of some of the things that were going on, but if you look at the heart of the Almighty, the biggest problem YeHoVaH has with creation is when they worship something other than Himself. Whether it is man, whether it is an idol, whether it is stuff. Whatever it is.

When we put something before Him, He is not going to deal with that, He is not going to tolerate it. So, here in His creation, He confounds the language.

So under Nimrod's leadership, in Genesis 11:1-2, the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

- *Genesis 11:1-2 (King James Version), ¹And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. ²And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.*

And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. The land of Shinar would become known as Babylon.

- *Genesis 11:3-5 King James Version), ³And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. ⁴And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. ⁵And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.*

Every city on the planet is trying to make a name for itself. They want to be a leader. Now cities here in the United States have compatible or sister cities in other countries. Some cities are known for one thing, another city is known for another thing. Every city is trying to attract businesses and people so that it can grow and expand itself to be known as a great city. Some cities we know in the world today have become icons. Detroit used to be an icon. New York, Chicago, San Francisco, LA, and Paris are iconic cities.

- *Genesis 11:6-9 (King James Version), ⁶And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. ⁷Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. ⁸So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. ⁹Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.*

They said let us make a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. And YeHoVaH came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built. And YeHoVaH said, "Behold, the people are one and they have one language and this they begin to do and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do."

Now why is this a problem? I mean the Bible wants us and tells us that we should be one. The Bible teaches us that we all should be saying the same thing. The Bible shows us very clearly that when it comes down to faith, that we all should be on the same page. So why is this a problem?

Verse 7 says, Go to, let us go down, and confound their language that they may not understand one another's speech. So YeHoVaH scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because YeHoVaH did there confound the language of all the earth.

You see the problem was that they were trying to **make a name for themselves**. That's the issue; when you try to **make a name for yourself**.

Now YeHoVaH says, except YeHoVaH builds the house, the laborer labors in vain. Except YeHoVaH watches over the city, the watchman watch in vain. Basically it is saying that **if the Almighty is not in it, His people should not be in it either**. Now that's a simple fact.

If YeHoVaH is not in it, those who confess YeHoVaH should not be in it either. In order to determine whether the Almighty is in something or not, it is going to require, 1) a knowledge of his word, and 2) an understanding by his spirit. Really when you begin to understand what His words say and understand his spirit, then now you can be able to determine based on what is going on in something, **whether it is of Him or it is not of Him**.

Many of us have gotten involved, engaged, and entangled in stuff knowing right off that He wasn't in it, but trying somehow to figure out how to make it right. Do you understand what I'm saying? We feel that, "Okay I'm in it now, how can I make this right in the eyes of the Almighty?" Some things you can't. You just can't, so what do you do? Repentance means to turn. There are certain things that we need to repent from.

Now whenever I say that, I always have to say that you know if you are married to someone and you've come to the conclusion that YeHoVaH wasn't in it, that doesn't mean that you walk away from your husband or you walk away from your wife. Because there are other scriptures that apply to those situations. You can't get stuck on, "Oh this is what the word says!" Yeah, the word doesn't just say that, it says some other things too. You jump out of the skillet into the fire.

Let us make a name. The word for “*name*” in Hebrew is Shem. Shem is a primitive word, it has a few of Strong’s numbers associated with it. And what they are saying is, “Let us make a mark, a memorial of individuality by implication, honor, authority, character.” You see, **Nimrod was making a name for himself.**

As I stated, the word “*name*” in Hebrew is Shem. When we think about “*The Name,*” we think **Ha Shem**. Now this is how some people in certain religious circles refer to the Almighty. They say that His name is too holy for them to mention. And when you call them on that, “Well we don’t know what His name is.” When you call them on that, “Well, because we are not sure that’s His name.” And when you call them on that...

Twice in identifying this rebellion against YeHoVaH, it is noted where the rebellion began. **Genesis 10:10** states, “And the beginning of his (Nimrod’s) kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh **in the land of Shinar.**” The beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom was Babel. Every time we associate anything with Babel, we always associate it with something that is not good, the spirit of Nimrod.

Now, I’m not one who tries to associate a spirit to everything because in the circles that I’ve been in, people just do that randomly. You know, you got a Jezebel spirit; you got an Ahab spirit; you got this spirit; you got that spirit. And, typically you identify the spirit by one’s behavior, but in this particular case, we see that something occurred in Babel, in the land of Shinar, that YeHoVaH said, “You know what, the people are one, but their imagination is skewed. If I don’t stop this here, I am going to have a much bigger problem down the road.”

But when the people were scattered, the spirit that was engaged in the building of this tower, went with the people. There is a commercial: you can take a boy out of the country, but you can’t take the country out of the boy. There are certain things that you can do to remove a person from an environment, but in the drug world or culture, we call it stinky thinking. There is a term called “dry drunk” where person who used to be an alcoholic who focuses on abstaining from drinking alcohol without changing one’s mind and attitude. Then the focus is on resistance not change. “I can’t drink, I can’t drink! Oh! If I drink I may not come back this time.” Why do you want to drink? Are you an addict? “Oh, they told me that I’m an addict, once an addict, always an addict.”

Does that mean once a son of Satan, always a son of Satan? Does that mean, once a sinner, always a sinner? People can't change? Can a leopard change his spots? No, he can't. Anyway, you understand what I'm saying. Nothing is impossible for YeHoVaH. I don't think YeHoVaH is going to change the leopard's spots, but you know what the saying is, that this person is always going to be that way. But the only thing that can really change a person is a person's attitude, their mind, their understanding.

When Paul talks about **one has to renew their mind**, what he is saying is that you have to change your understanding of things. You see, they tried to tell me that I was an addict and that I was just one drink away or one drug away from entering into the point of no return. As long as bought into that concept, I had a fear of alcohol and a fear of drugs. They put fear in me. **My Heavenly Father hasn't given me a spirit of fear.** So I had to take a different approach. I said, "You know what? I'm not an alcoholic! I'm not a drug addict! **You don't tell me who I am. He determines who I am.**" And if my mind is renewed, my actions and my attitude will be toward **pleasing Him** instead of trying to resist something that is going to kill me. Because in trying to please Him, I realized it is not the drug that's the problem.

You know, they talk about "drug of choice." It was not the drug that was the problem, it was me. I was the problem. And I recognized that I was the problem, and that I got me in the situation I was in. Where I am today is a series of actions and reactions to things that came at me. In the past, the mechanisms I used to act or react were not founded in the word. So my actions and my reactions created problems for me.

Because my actions and my reactions were not based on the word, I needed to get a deeper understanding of who I am and why I act or react a certain way because now I was acting like my daddy. You see, if my daddy was a holy man, I wouldn't be acting like that unless I have not taken on the spirit that my daddy has taken on. You see if my daddy has taken on the Spirit of YeHoVaH, then he now is going to live a life that is spirit filled. Does that mean that I'm going to be spirit filled because my dad is spirit filled? No. But my dad is setting an example. If I follow that example, what is that going to do? It is going to lead me to the things that he was led to, because his is going to tell me, "You know what, how I'm living is not my own doing. This was not my life before the word. However, since I've come to the knowledge

of Him who created me, it literally changed my life. It changed my way of thinking; now I see things differently. I have a better understanding because the understanding that I have now is **based on His word not my understanding that I learned in the world.**” Is this making sense to anybody but me?

His beginning was Babel, and it came to pass as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. Shinar was the region containing the cities of Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh. The locations of which, except Akkad, are unknown. Shinar, on the Alluvial Plain of Babylonia, for many centuries was perhaps the most fertile region on earth.

Now you see fertility. The most fertile region on earth is going to have a root for fertility and when you begin to deal with the goddesses of fertility you begin to trace them back. You see, every myth out there, every Greek myth, every Roman myth, every idol had an origination from somewhere. They all originated somewhere, in somebody’s mind. Somebody was the first person to worship that. So I need to find out, okay, where is the first place in history, especially if I can find it the scriptures, where this thing started. Because now I can see the motivation, I can see what calls you to do that. I can see the response, the reaction, and how it evolved. So now I know what it is based on. Once I know that, then I can determine whether it is good or evil. Until then, I have no knowledge. I just go along with everybody else. And that’s what we did. We did that with Sunday; we did that with Christmas and Easter. We’ve done that most of our lives.

When we start asking questions and begin to look the origin of things and say, “Wait a minute! Hold it!” Now you decide to get off the bus. And most of us, as an analogy, get off the bus in the middle of nowhere with no idea where we going and how we are going to get there. Faith in YeHoVaH is like getting off the bus in the middle of the desert trusting that He is going to take care of you. You see why many people don’t get off the bus. “What am I going to do? I’m going to die out here! There’s nowhere to go; I look around and I see nothing but desert!” Often times that’s what faith looks like. You can’t see your own way, but I know one thing, where this bus is headed, I don’t want to be on it!

The early postdiluvians (persons who lived after the Biblical flood) traveled east and started to build a tower there (Genesis 11:1-9). Amraphel, King of Shinar, invaded Canaan in the days of Abraham (Genesis 14:1). Later, Nebuchadnezzar was a ruler of the land of Shinar and at that time it was known as Babylon (Daniel 1:2). Legend has it that in the midst of the tumult of war, Nimrod and Semiramis met—and in none too savory circumstances, for tradition states that she was an inn/brothel keeper in the city of Erech. Semiramis was a native of Erech, which as evidenced by its name, seems to have been built by a Hamitic family (Ham's wife, said to have been descended from Cain, built the first Erech in honor of his son). The name Semiramis is a later, Hellenized form of the Sumerian name "Sammur-amat," or "gift of the sea." And you will find that if you don't do the research on Shinar you'll never see Semiramis. Because it's not there. And there are people who don't want to do the research, yet they want to question the research, without even doing the research. The initial element "sammur" when translated into Hebrew becomes "Shinar" (the biblical name for lower Mesopotamia), and is the word from which we derive "Sumeria."

This one tarnished woman then, had such a lasting impact upon world history that not only do we call by her name the land from which civilization flowed, but YeHoVaH himself through the sacred writer has let us know that its distinguishing characteristic was that it was "the Land of Shinar," or Semiramis.

Very little has come down to us through the millennia concerning Semiramis' rise to power, but it is safe to assume, and I don't like assuming, but if you look at all the evidence you have to draw some kind of conclusion, that it was initially upon Nimrod's coattails that she rode. Although later in life, as well as throughout history, her influence overwhelmingly obscured that of her husband. Of course, it would not do to have an ex-harlot upon the throne, so the "polite fiction" was invented that she was a virgin sprung from the sea at Nimrod's landing, and hence a suitable bride for the emperor. Thus the title Semiramis which has totally obscured her original name.

Although Nimrod was supposedly a brilliant strategist, he made a fatal blunder when he allowed Semiramis to gain full control over this religious hierarchy and through it the minds and hearts of the people. When a schism occurred between them, she was able to turn it from a

tool of support into a deadly weapon. And this one of the reasons why when you begin to look at the book of Esther, when the king's wife did not want to submit to the king asking her to come, he was left with no choice but to dethrone her.

This is one of the biggest problems in a lot of ministries that have husband and wife teams, pastors and co-pastors, is that there are alliances. There are alliances with the wife and alliances with the husband. You don't know where a person stands until there's a dispute. When that dispute occurs, people take sides. We take sides. You will find that in the political process of relationships, my enemy now should be your enemy, if you are my friend. So, whose side are you going to be on?

Unfortunately, a divorce has a tendency to force children to take sides. It's like you can't love both of your parents. You love both of your parents, but you can't stay with both of your parents. If they split and live in separate homes, you are torn because you have to live somewhere. "Do I live with mom? Do I live with dad?"

There are circumstances in life that force us to decide on whose side we are going to stand. Joshua said, "Listen Israel. Now you all have got to make a decision on who you are going to follow. Are you going to follow the gods of your fathers that were on the other side, or are you going to follow YeHoVaH who has lead us into this land of milk and honey? As for me and my house, we are going to serve YeHoVaH. But you have to make a decision as to who you are going to serve." YeHoVaH said through Yeshua, you can't serve two masters. It's impossible. You know, I knew someone who joined rival gangs. How do you be in two gangs that are rivals? What kind of mind does such a thing?

The rift between husband and wife occurred when the queen bore an illegitimate son, and the king threatened with both dethronement and exposure of her true origin. Now when you are dealing with a harlot, when you are dealing with a prostitute, when you are dealing with a lady of the night, when you are dealing with a person who is promiscuous, they are not loyal. Do you understand what I'm saying? And that seems the situation with Semiramis. She wasn't loyal. So the king threatened to dethrone her and expose her. Semiramis, of course would not allow this to take place, and devised a plot to overthrow Nimrod during the course of the New Year's festivities. You are going to see that this whole Christmas thing, this whole

spirit of Nimrod, it is deeply engrained in Easter, in New Year, and in Sunday. It's all the same spirit.

During the course of the New Year's festivities, at which the advent of Nimrod's rule was celebrated, there was a certain feast exclusively for the royal family and the upper echelons of the priesthood. During this feast, which included "courses" of psychedelic and hallucinogenic drugs, a year-old ram was traditionally sacrificed by being torn limb-from-limb while still alive, and its flesh eaten raw. Now you frown on this, but why would YeHoVaH, in the Torah, say do not tear the limbs from a live animal? You see, when you understand the Torah, when you read the Torah, and you understand stuff like this, it starts to make sense. You can't seethe a kid in his mother's milk; and there are certain things that you just don't do. You do not rip an animal's flesh, and you certainly don't eat it with the blood in it.

This ram symbolized the old year passing into the heavens to allow room for the New Year. A new-born lamb was then presented which, symbolizing the new year, would be kept and fattened for the next year's ceremonies. This year Semiramis directed the ritual according to the formula, with the exception that when the time came for the ram to be slaughtered, it was the king who was torn to pieces at the hands of the drug-crazed priesthood and Semiramis' bastard son was installed as king.

Now you would think how can they do such a thing and who would take part in that. When you have joined alliances, you see, when the priests of Yeshua's day were able to find individuals that would testify that He blasphemed, it gave them cause to have Him put to death.

Some deaths are violent; especially when you are under the influence of drugs and alcohol. For example, a young man was recently sentenced for being responsible for the killing of four people and seriously injuring two others. He was under the influence of alcohol. People under the influence of drugs and alcohol, are not in their right state of mind. They are impaired.

One of the things gangs require before a person is initiated, is that they have to do some drugs, get drunk, and they listen to some hard core hip hop. **And be warned when they have to put a warning label on the stuff you listen to.** They put a warning label on the stuff that you

can watch, and they say, “Listen!! I know you are mature. Or, you think you are. This stuff here is bad for you, enter in at your own risk because it is going to affect you.” Let me tell you something folks, you can’t go into something, see something, and then leave like you never saw it. It gets into your spirit.

Thus Nimrod the mighty hunter died a horrible death as a trapped beast himself. Semiramis named her son Damu (from the Sumerian “dam,” or blood), which in the later Babylonian language became Dammuzi, in Hebrew Tammuz, and in Greek Adonis (Adonai). Now those who look at the Hebrew calendar, and this I could never figure out, but Babylon is so engrained in the Jewish Culture that the name of the fourth month on the Hebrew calendar is named after an idol, Tammuz.

Tammuz in Greek is Adonis, which is the derivation of the term “Adonai.” It is said that the Greek borrowed it from the Hebrew people. Adonis was a borrowing from the Semitic word adon, meaning “lord,” which is related to Adonai, one of the names used to refer to the God in the Hebrew Bible and still used in Judaism to the present day.

Syrian “Adonis” is *Gauas* or *Aos*, akin to Egyptian *Osiris*, the Semitic *Tammuz* and *Baal Hadad*, the Etruscan *Atunis* and the Phrygian *Attis*, all of whom are deities of rebirth and vegetation.

So now you have something that dies and is resurrected. Semiramis assumed the regency for her son, and ruled as absolute monarch for 42 more years. In order to avoid having to kill her son on the next New Year’s Day, she instituted an annual nationwide sports competition, the winner of which would have the “honor” of taking Damu’s place ascending into heaven to become a god.

When we begin to look at all of these myths, gods, heavens, and all of these things, we realize they came from somewhere. Today we read it and say, “Oh it’s just Greek mythology. Oh! It’s just mysticism! That’s just mystic!” Where did it come from? You see when you begin to understand all these things, now you’ll have a deeper understanding of why YeHoVaH said that we have to **teach diligently** to our children His commands. Because if we don’t **teach diligently** His commands, the world around them is going to suck them up because they were **born into the world**, even though they came from your house.

Adam and Eve were made in the image of YeHoVaH and one of their two sons was a murderer. Cain had no peer or worldly influences. You understand what I am saying?

Make no mistake that just because you love the Lord, and those of us who are honest, we know that with all of our love for the Almighty, that there are people in our house, and in our families, who don't. And we have to live with that and have to deal with that. And then we have people in our homes, in our families, in our lives that do things that lack understanding.

From Babylon, this mystic religion spread to all the surrounding nations. As the years went on, the world was populated by the descendants of Noah. Everywhere the symbols were the same, and everywhere the cult of the mother and child became the popular system. Their worship was celebrated with the most disgusting and immoral practices. The sign of the cross was sacred to Tammuz, as symbolizing the life giving principle and as the first letter of his name. The cross is represented upon vast numbers of the most ancient altars and temples, and did not, as many have supposed, originate with Christianity.

You think about it, the cross supposedly is what Yeshua was crucified on. If Yeshua was crucified on the cross, then the cross was before Yeshua. Before Yeshua was even born, they were crucifying people on a cross. But just like good Christians, we take something evil and try to turn it into something good. And now you have crosses hanging up in the worship center in many places.

From this mystery religion, the patriarch Abraham was separated by the divine call. With this same evil cult, the nation that sprang from Abraham had constant conflict, until under Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, it was grafted onto what was left of the religion of Israel in the northern kingdom in the day of Ahab.

Now we have traced it from Nimrod all the way to Jezebel and Ahab in the northern Kingdom, but it goes much farther. It was the cause of the Northern Kingdom's captivity. Judah was polluted by it, for Baal-worship was but the Canaanite form of Babylonian mysteries. Only by being sent into captivity to Babylon did Judah become partially cured of her fondness for idolatry.

Baal was the Sun-God, the Life-giving one, identical with Tammuz (Hebrew). It was a fertility god widely worshipped in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine; equivalent to *Osiris* in

Egypt and *Adonis* of the Greeks. His consort was the goddess Ishtar (Astarte or Ashtoreth) (EASTER). Their cult involved licentious rites.

Remember when Moses went up to the mountain to get the commands? Before Moses could get down from the mountain, they had built an idol and started having orgies. That stuff was in them. The spirit of those idols went into the land. Those who came out of Egypt, we know they did not make it. Their children made it, but the spirit was there. As a matter of fact, YeHoVaH said to them, "You are about to enter into the land. Listen Moses, I've given these people my laws and as soon as you are dead, they are not going to follow my law. And those who do and hold people to it will be ridiculed and condemned."

Tammuz was supposed to be killed by a wild boar while shepherding his flocks. Now you will see why there is ham. How did pork which is forbidden in scripture become the main dish for Easter? Oh! And then we get honey glazed! His wife rescued him from the underworld. His death was taken to represent the onset of winter. The long dry season was broken by spring rains when he came to life again. The fourth month of the Babylonian and later the Jewish calendar was named for him (June-July). The only mention of him in the Bible occurs in connection with the custom of women mourning for him (Ezekiel 8:14). His Greek name, Adonis, is derived from the Phoenician and Hebrew word for "Lord" (Adonai).

The letter "t" is a pagan symbol of the god Tammuz. Here we see some ancient icons, letterings, and images (The Flying Penis; The Transition of the Symbol of Tammuz). And this thing known as the Flying Penis is the first symbol of the cross. You can see it on the top side; it looks like it has a woman's sexual image, and on the flip side, the man. The tradition of the symbol of Tammuz evolved. On this photo of Pope Benedict, notice the shape of the cross he is wearing on his vestment. It is not a long cross like we would normally see.

When I was Lutheran pastor, this is what I wore. (Arthur shows a large metal cross on a chain.) And in the Church of God in Christ, they have them hanging around their neck, but the cross is in their shirt pocket. That is a symbol, it is a way to identify Church of God in Christ people, especially their ministers or pastors. Lutherans, Episcopalians, Catholic, Roman Catholics, have BIG crosses. Other ancient symbols of the cross are the onyx.

I use to love this emblem; proud if you would, because this represented my Savior. Until I found out where it came from. And you know, it is amazing how the average person knows that Yeshua was crucified on a cross. Was He the first one crucified on a cross? No! So, the cross existed long before Yeshua. Yes! So, how did the cross that existed long before Yeshua become the symbol of Christianity?

By the time of Ezekiel, these idolatrous practices had strongly taken hold. Now YeHoVaH warned His people. He warned them in His commands. In the Torah. The Torah is full of commands warning against idolatry and yet idolatry was so much a part of His people's lives that He sent them into captivity over and over and over and over again, trying to purge them of idolatry. And even to this day, His people are idolatrous and trying to make idolatry become holy by adding some scripture to it.

- *Ezekiel 8:12-18 (New International Version), ¹²He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of Israel are doing in the darkness, each at the shrine of his own idol? They say, 'The Lord does not see us; the Lord has forsaken the land.'" ¹³Again, he said, "You will see them doing things that are even more detestable." ¹⁴Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the Lord, and I saw women sitting there, mourning the god Tammuz. ¹⁵He said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? You will see things that are even more detestable than this." ¹⁶He then brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord, and there at the entrance to the temple, between the portico and the altar, were about twenty-five men. With their backs toward the temple of the Lord and their faces toward the east, they were bowing down to the sun in the east. ¹⁷He said to me, "Have you seen this, son of man? Is it a trivial matter for the people of Judah to do the detestable things they are doing here? Must they also fill the land with violence and continually arouse my anger? Look at them putting the branch to their nose! ¹⁸Therefore I will deal with them in anger; I will not look on them with pity or spare them. Although they shout in my ears, I will not listen to them."*

Now they were not following what Solomon said, that you would turn your **face toward the temple** and you will pray. Here they are at the temple facing East with **their backs towards the temple!!** We were bowing down to the Sun in the East.

To date Christians, Jews and many Muslims face east when they pray. I put up a teaching on YouTube and talked about this whole idea of praying toward the east. Most people who do it are especially religious people. I know friends, people that I've gone to their religious institutions, in part of the service they have the whole congregation face to the east. They say,

“You know we are facing toward Jerusalem toward the temple.” Well you know if the world is round even if you face west you are praying toward the temple. Or north or south.

Do you understand what I’m saying? This is a round world, it is not a flat world. So you got people in the east praying to the east. People in the west praying to the east. This practice is right here.

- *Ezekiel 8:17 (New International Version), He said to me, “Have you seen this, son of man? Is it a trivial matter for the people of Judah to do the detestable things they are doing here? Must they also fill the land with violence and continually arouse my anger? Look at them putting the branch to their nose!”*

Some say that the branch could possibly be a holly wreath.

- *Ezekiel 8:18 “Therefore I will deal with them in anger; I will not look on them with pity or spare them. Although they shout in my ears, I will not listen to them.”*

They are doing all these detestable things. They are going to get to a point with all of these detestable things that they are going to be ensnared even though they have been warned:

“You are going into a trap! You are being snared! You are going to get caught up!”
“It’s my life.”

“Repent!”
“I’m not. You lived your life, let me live my life.”

And then parents, we make a huge mistake when we begin to compromise saying dumb stuff like, “You know we did it.” Yes we did do it, but our parents didn’t teach us the Torah. Yeah we did some dumb stuff. Then our children say,

“You know when you was my age you did this stuff.”

“Yes I did because I didn’t know better just like you don’t. I wish my parents had told me the reasoning behind what not to do.”

They just told me not to do something. But let me tell you something, when you walk away from the word of YeHoVaH, you’re not living according to His word, you are running into the arms of the devil and he is giving you fuel to do it. And it all looks fun and it all looks glamorous, until you get in it , in the mix of it, and you are so trapped in it, and tied-up, and now you want to get out.

When you are addicted, it is in your spirit, the rush, the adrenalin. All that stuff is in your spirit. The **so called fun**: people are in places they don't want to be in, doing things with people they don't want to be with, but they will sell themselves to the devil, but not sell themselves to YeHoVaH.

According to *Langer's Encyclopedia of World History*, (article "Santa"), "**Santa**" was a **common name for Nimrod** throughout Asia Minor. This was also the same fire god who came down the chimney of the ancient pagans and the same fire god to whom infants were burned and eaten in human sacrifices. This was done among those who were once God's people.

Today Santa Claus (spelled Satan, if you just move a few letters around) comes from "Saint Nicholas." Washington Irving, in 1809, is responsible for remaking the original old, stern bishop of this same name into the new "Jolly St. Nick" in his *Knickerbocker History of New York*. Most of the rest of America's Christmas traditions are even more recent than this.

I was driving down South Blvd the other day, meditating. I saw this vehicle in my rear view mirror; it looked like a float. As it passed me, I see a man riding in his red Jeep with all the Christmas things on it: Santa Claus, Christmas tree, stacks of gifts, Christmas wreath, etc. I blew my horn when he passed me, and asked him to pose for me. At the stop light, he politely posed as I leaned out the window and took a picture of him. This is modern day Christmas. This is what Jesus died for?

"Old Nick" has long been recognized as a term for the devil. In Revelation 2:6 and 15, we read about a "doctrine of the Nicolaitanes," which Messiah twice tells His people "[He] hates." Let's analyze the word *Nicolaitane*. It means "follower of Nicholas." *Nikos* means "conqueror, destroyer." *Laos* means, "People." Nicolaitanes, then, are people who follow the conqueror or destroyer – Nimrod. This was determined back at Babel. That spirit has a long history all the way through to the Book of Revelation.

If you have believed that following Christmas is an innocent Christian custom, let this truth sink in! "An old Babylonian fable told of *an evergreen tree which sprang out of a dead tree stump*. The old stump symbolized the dead Nimrod, the new evergreen tree symbolized that Nimrod had come to life again in Tammuz! Among the Druids the *oak* was sacred, among

the Egyptians it was the palm, and *in Rome it was the fir*, which was decorated with red berries during the Saturnalia!" (Walsh, *Curiosities of Popular Customs*, p. 242).

So where does the Christmas tree come in? (Arthur show a picture of the White House Christmas tree in Washington, DC) Why are churches and houses of worship decorated with Christmas trees? What does this have to do with the birth of Jesus?

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, under "Celastrales," exposes the origin of the holly wreath: "European pagans brought holly sprays into their homes, offering them to the fairy people of the forests as refuge from the harsh winter weather."

Now the Christmas tree is identified as the penis of Ra, just like the steeple on the churches. The wreath; do I need to tell you what that symbolizes?

"During the Saturnalia, the Roman winter festival, branches of holly were exchanged as tokens of friendship. The earliest Roman Christians apparently used holly as a decoration at the Christmas season."

You see all of this stuff is associated with orgies and pagan rituals and sex gods and fertility. And people can't make the connection. "Well, that's not what we do!" "That's not how we celebrate!" "It doesn't mean that to us!"

Christmas is incomplete to many unless it involves "kissing under the mistletoe." This pagan custom was natural on a night that involved much revelry done in the spirit of drunken orgies. Just like today, this "kissing" usually occurred at the beginning of the Saturnalia/Christmas celebration. Of course, you have got to do some foreplay. You have folks walking around with Mistletoe at Christmas parties. They find that favorite person they have been lusting after all year; now is their chance to get a kiss.

"I'm going to steal a kiss. I got the Mistletoe! Mistletoe! Mistletoe!"

Now, you know kisses usually lead to other stuff. It just doesn't stop at kisses. You find these little boys and girls and they want to sit around and hug upon each other and kiss; and the next thing you know, they are feeling in places they shouldn't be feeling. Once they start feeling in places they shouldn't be feeling, parts get aroused. And once parts get aroused, you want to do something with them. Been there! And yet we say,

"Y'all supposed to keep it holy."

That's what I said. My wife, I'm so thankful for my wife. My wife, takes it to the next level, "Take your hands off her! If you two need to sit in two different chairs ..."

I am going to leave you with Jeremiah 10 because I need to address this.

- *Jeremiah 10:1-2 (King James Version), ¹"Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: ²Thus saith the Lord, **Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.**"*

We are not to learn the way of the heathen. Everything that I just showed you about Christmas has pagan/heathen origins.

- *Jeremiah 10:3-4 "For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. ⁴They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not."*

This has absolutely nothing to do with a Christmas tree. Nothing! Now people want to use this, especially when they are dealing with people who don't know any better. It is easy to say they decked it with silver and gold, referring to ornaments. But this deals with idolatry!

- *Jeremiah 10:5-6 (King James Version), "They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good. ⁶Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might."*

This is dealing with an individual going out in the woods because some idols were made of wood. Some idols were made of stone. Some idols were made of metal. And so they would go out in the woods and cut down a tree and then they would shape it and form their idol out of it and then they would bring it in their homes and then they would worship it. Now can you associate this with Christmas and the Christmas tree? It is a stretch, you could, but you need to know that this is not what this is about. If somebody brings that to me and says, "This is why you should not have Christmas trees." I would argue them successfully and make them look like they don't know what they are talking about. So if you are using it for that purpose, without laying a foundation, you would be taking scripture and twisting it.

I'm not going to read these, but I encourage you to read:

- Matthew 2:1-11, the Magi come to Yeshua in the house.

Those that read the Christmas story, they start in Luke and work their way back to Matthew. Luke deals more with the birth and Mathew deals more with the Magi coming after the birth. But if you notice, **the Magi didn't come to a manger, they came to a house.** Pay attention when you read it, they came into a house, not into a stall where there was a baby in a manger. But in all of the nativity scenes, you see the Magi, the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, animals in a stall with a baby in a manger. That is a false depiction of Luke Chapter 2 and Matthew Chapter 2 because when the Magi, wise men came, they came into a house.

Also look at Luke Chapter 2 and finally read Romans 1:18-32.